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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

OFFICE OF NATIONAL ESTIMATES

10 August 1961

MEMORANDUM FOR THE DIRECTOR

SUBJECT: Recent Developments in Soviet-Yugoslav Relations

1. Whenever high-ranking Soviet or Yugoslav officials trade visits or talk to one another, questions naturally arise about the possibility of a change in Soviet-Yugoslav relations. The recent visit to Moscow of Yugoslav Foreign Minister Popovic and the issuance of the new Soviet Party Program, coming almost simultaneously, again raise the question of the implications of the current improvement in Soviet-Yugoslav relations. For example, one of Popovic's advisers who accompanied him on the trip gave Western officials to understand that the party program would acknowledge that Yugoslavia was "building socialism," a step which would indeed have been an important gesture toward rapprochement.

2. Examination of the party program, however, reveals little for the Yugoslavs to be pleased about. Though it acknowledges that the Yugoslavs at one time "embarked on the road to socialism," it

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also says that subsequently, by their revisionist policy, they "set Yugoslavia off against the socialist camp," and created a danger "that the revolutionary conquests of the Yugoslav people would be lost." At another point the Yugoslav party program is referred to as most fully embodying "the ideology of revisionism." But the Soviets, as before, do not offer any explicit judgment as to whether the Yugoslavs at present are on or off the road to socialism, although they do assert that the building of socialism outside the Bloc is doctrinally impossible.

3. The Soviets perhaps still are trying to convey to the Yugoslavs that the door remains open for a return to their former status, provided they recant. This is probably as far as the Soviets feel they can go (and they may have told Popovic as much in Moscow) in the face of Chinese and Albanian claims that the Yugoslavs, far from building socialism, have deserted to the enemy and become outright "imperialist agents."

4. The Yugoslavs, for their part, are far from pleased with the references to Yugoslavia in the Soviet party program. In their commentaries, the Yugoslavs have forcefully reaffirmed many of the very doctrinal positions which have given offense to the Soviets in the past. Indeed, Kardelj told Ambassador Kennan in early August

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that the gulf between Soviet and Yugoslav ideological views was greater than the gulf between US and Soviet ideological views.

5. In NIE 15-61, "The Outlook for Yugoslavia," dated 23 May 1961, we said that the doctrinal gap between the Soviet and Yugoslav parties was so great that "it is unlikely to be bridged in the absence of fundamental concessions by either side." The Soviets have not made such concessions in their party program nor are they likely to in the future. Nor is there any indication that the Yugoslavs contemplate any such changes. The Yugoslavs continue to hope that the Bloc will change and will become a looser grouping of genuinely autonomous Communist states with which they can once again develop closer and more intimate relations. In any event, they value their present freedom of maneuver and the other advantages of independence far too much to subordinate their country or party to the control of others.

6. The Popovic visit to Moscow probably had no connection with any matters of ideological rapprochement. The Soviets have recognized the significance of Yugoslav influence among the neutralist states, and are apparently now concerned to turn this to their own account insofar as they can, although in the past they have sought

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to limit Yugoslav influence among the neutrals. Consequently, the Soviets desired, on the eve of the neutral's conference opening at Belgrade on 1 September to commit the Yugoslavs as much as possible to the support of Soviet positions on international issues. Above all, the Soviets would like to obtain from the Belgrade conference an endorsement of the Soviet position on Berlin.

7. Judging by Mr. Kennan's reports, Moscow must have been gratified by Popovic's responses. It has been clear for some time that Yugoslav views on such general questions as disarmament and colonialism generally parallel those of Moscow. Belgrade has already gone some way to lend support to the Soviet position on Berlin. Thus, the Soviets can be fairly confident that the Yugoslavs in general will lean more to Soviet than to Western positions on some of the major international issues.

8. On the other hand, basic Yugoslav views, rooted in their independent "non-Bloc" position, will, as in the past, prevent the Yugoslavs from full endorsement of Soviet positions. We do not think, for example, that the Yugoslavs would go so far as to attend a conference to sign a peace treaty with East Germany which was attended only by Bloc countries. The Yugoslavs are themselves

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increasingly preoccupied with the uncommitted countries, and they desire, in the absence of fundamental change in the Bloc, to identify themselves with the "neutrals" rather than either "bloc."

9. The visit also enabled the Soviets to thumb their noses at the Chinese and the Albanians, both of whom have long been pressing for a Bloc policy of all-out hostility toward Yugoslavia. Albania, moreover, has seen previous Soviet-Yugoslav talks as insidious plots aimed at the unseating of the Albanian leaders. When Khrushchev and Gromyko toward the end of 1960 spoke of "identical" Soviet and Yugoslav views on many questions of foreign policy, as did the recent communique at the close of the Popovic visit, the Albanians responded with a long, scarcely-veiled diatribe in Zeri i Popullit against Soviet policies, especially those toward Yugoslavia. It must have been particularly galling, both to the Albanians and the Chinese, to see Pravda carry a photograph of Popovic standing on the podium in Moscow alongside Khrushchev and his faithful Balkan myrmidon, Todor Zhivkov.

FOR THE BOARD OF NATIONAL ESTIMATES



Abbot Smith
Acting Chairman

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MEMORANDUM FOR: **The DCI**

**This memorandum was prepared
in response to the questions which you
recently put to Mr. Kent.**

11 August 1961

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